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ABSTRACT

Examining over 20 years of research findings, including the most recent research on child care and child development, this book attempts to answer the three most important questions parents have about day care: Is day care harmful? Are babies damaged by the fact that their mothers work? and, Are working parents, by being absent during most of the day, neglecting the needs of their children? Pediatricians, researchers, teachers, and society in general are ambivalent about the answers to these questions. Researchers have debated these issues publicly since the mid-1980s when the controversy over the impact of a mother's employment on infants was first noted in academic journals and spread to the popular press. Divided into two parts, this book discusses in Part 1 the research on the quality of child care in America; day care studies; the attachment controversy; the realities of the lives of mothers and infants who use day care; and what is known about how parents' work lives affect their children. Part 2 is a practical guide to child rearing, which focuses on how developmental issues affect child care needs through early adolescence, the age when self-care becomes appropriate. Contains 190 references. (DR)

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